

## CLAIMS

1. An information provision apparatus comprising:

5        a data stream generation source which generates a data stream of content that has timewise continuity;

         a metadata generation source which generates metadata which is data that describes said data stream content and that is unitized in correspondence to a segment  
10 of said data stream; and

         a capsulization section which capsulizes said data stream packets and said metadata unit packets and generating a capsulized stream.

15 2. The information provision apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said metadata unit packet is placed so that processing of said metadata unit is completed before the processing start time of a corresponding segment of said data stream.

20 3. The information provision apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said metadata packet includes the processing start time of the first packet of said corresponding segment of said data stream, and the duration of that  
25 segment.

4. The information provision apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said metadata is described by structured

description.

5. The information provision apparatus according to claim  
1, wherein said metadata unit is described by structured  
5 description.

6. The information provision apparatus according to claim  
4, wherein said structured description is defined by means  
of DTD of XML.

10 7. The information provision apparatus according to claim  
4, wherein said structured description is defined by means  
of RDF of XML.

15 8. The information provision apparatus according to claim  
4, wherein said structured description is defined by means  
of XML Schema.

9. The information provision apparatus according to claim  
20 5, wherein said structured description is defined by means  
of DTD of XML.

10. The information provision apparatus according to  
claim 5, wherein said structured description is defined  
25 by means of RDF of XML.

11. The information provision apparatus according to  
claim 5, wherein said structured description is defined

by means of XML Schema.

12. An information provision apparatus comprising:

5 a data stream generation source which generates a data stream of content that has timewise continuity;

a metadata generation source which generates metadata which is data that relates to said data stream content and that is unitized in correspondence to a segment of said data stream; and

10 a capsulization section which capsulizes said data stream packets and said metadata unit packets and generating a capsulized stream.

13. An information provision apparatus comprising:

15 a data stream generation source which generates a data stream of content that has timewise continuity;

a metadata generation source which generates metadata which is data that describes said data stream content and that is unitized in correspondence to a segment of said data stream;

20 a synchronization section which synchronizes said data stream segment and its corresponding said metadata unit; and

a capsulization section which capsulizes  
25 post-synchronization data stream packets and metadata unit packets and generates a capsulized stream.

14. An information receiving apparatus comprising:

an extraction section which extractes a content data stream and metadata that describes that content from a capsulized stream; and

a processing section whichr processes unit by unit  
5 said metadata that has been unitized in correspondence to a segment of said data stream.

15. The information receiving apparatus according to claim 14, wherein said units are merged in accordance  
10 with restriction information for merging said metadata units.

16. The information receiving apparatus according to claim 14, wherein said processing section displays said  
15 metadata.

17. The information receiving apparatus according to claim 14, wherein said processing section converts said data stream in accordance with conversion processing  
20 defined by said metadata.

18. The information receiving apparatus according to claim 14, wherein said processing section capsulizes data stream packets and metadata unit packets and transfers  
25 capsulized said data stream packets and capsulized metadata unit packets to another node.

19. The information receiving apparatus according to

claim 14, wherein said processing section collects together a plurality of metadata, and processes a plurality of said metadata together.

5 20. An information receiving apparatus comprising:

an extraction section which extractes a content data stream and metadata that describes that content from a capsulized stream;

10 a synchronization section which synchronizes unit by unit said metadata unitized in correspondence to a segment of said data stream with said content data stream and its corresponding metadata unit; and

a processing section which processes synchronized metadata unit by unit.

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21. The information receiving apparatus according to claim 20, wherein said synchronization section synchronizes said data stream segment and its corresponding said metadata unit stored in a storage section.

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22. A storage medium that can be read by a computer, and that stores an information provision program that reads a data stream of content that has timewise continuity and metadata which is data that describes said data stream content and that is unitized in correspondence to a segment of said data stream, and synchronizes said data stream segment and its corresponding said metadata unit for

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generating a capsulized data stream.

23. The storage medium according to claim 22, wherein  
a program is stored for placing said metadata unit packet  
5 so that processing of said metadata unit is completed  
before the processing start time of a corresponding  
segment of said data stream.

24. The storage medium according to claim 22, wherein  
10 said metadata is described by structured description.

25. The storage medium according to claim 22, wherein  
said metadata unit is described by structured  
description.  
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26. An information communication system comprising:  
an information provision apparatus that has a data  
stream generation source which generates a data stream  
of content that has timewise continuity, a metadata  
20 generation source which generates metadata which is data  
that describes said data stream content and that is  
unitized in correspondence to a segment of said data stream,  
and a capsulization section which capsulizes said data  
stream packets and said metadata unit packets and  
25 generates a capsulized stream; and

an information receiving apparatus that has an  
extraction section which extracts a content data stream  
and metadata that describes that content from said

capsulized stream generated by said information provision apparatus, and a processing section which processes unit by unit said metadata that has been unitized in correspondence to a segment of said data stream and said content data stream and its corresponding metadata unit.

27. An information communication system comprising:

an information provision apparatus that has a data stream generation source which generates a data stream of content that has timewise continuity, a metadata generation source which generates metadata which is data that describes said data stream content and that is unitized in correspondence to a segment of said data stream, a synchronization section which synchronizes said data stream segment and its corresponding said metadata unit, and a capsulization section which capsulizes said data stream packets and said metadata unit packets and generates a capsulized stream; and

an information receiving apparatus that has an extraction section which extractes a content data stream and metadata that describes that content from said capsulized stream generated by said information provision apparatus, a synchronization section which synchronizes unit by unit said metadata unitized in correspondence to a segment of said data stream with said content data stream and its corresponding metadata unit, and a processing section which processes synchronized metadata unit by unit.

28. An information provision method comprising:

generating a segment of a data stream of content  
that has timewise continuity and metadata which is data  
5 that describes said data stream content and that is  
unitized in correspondence to a segment of said data  
stream; and

capsulizing said data stream packets and said  
metadata unit packets and generating a capsulized stream.

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29. An information provision method comprising:

synchronizing a segment of a data stream of content  
that has timewise continuity and a unit of metadata which  
is data that describes said data stream content and that  
15 is unitized in correspondence to a segment of said data  
stream; and

capsulizing post-synchronization data stream  
packets and metadata unit packets and generating a  
capsulized stream.

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30. An information receiving method comprising:

extracting a content data stream and metadata that  
describes that content from a capsulized stream; and

processing unit by unit said metadata that has been  
25 unitized in correspondence to a segment of said data stream  
and said data stream.

31. An information receiving method comprising:



